



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2022-1249; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01159-T;**

**Amendment 39-22203; AD 2022-21-04]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The FAA is adopting a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus SAS Model A321-251NX, -252NX, -253NX, -271NX, and -272NX airplanes. This AD was prompted by a report of an un-commanded escape slide release during flight due to a blockage of one of the system venting features. This AD requires modification of affected reservoirs, and limits the installation of affected reservoirs, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is incorporated by reference. The FAA is issuing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** This AD becomes effective [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of certain publications listed in this AD as of [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

The FAA must receive comments on this AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

*AD Docket:* You may examine the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1249; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this final rule, the mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI), any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

*Material Incorporated by Reference:*

- For EASA material incorporated by reference in this AD, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website [easa.europa.eu](https://easa.europa.eu). You may find this material on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](https://ad.easa.europa.eu).

- For Safran service information identified in this final rule, contact Safran Aerosystems Evacuation, 1747 State Route 34, Wall Township, NJ 07727-3935; telephone 732-681-3527; website [safran-group.com/companies/safran-aerosystems-evacuation](https://safran-group.com/companies/safran-aerosystems-evacuation).

- You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1249.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Manuel F. Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, FAA, International Validation Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 562-627-5256; email Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written data, views, or arguments about this final rule. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2022-1249; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01159-T” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the final rule, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this final rule because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to regulations.gov, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this final rule.

**Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this AD contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this AD, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked

submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this AD. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Manuel F Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; phone 562-627-5256; email [Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov](mailto:Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov). Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

## **Background**

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2022-0176, dated August 24, 2022, to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus SAS Model A321-251NX, -252NX, -253NX, -271NX, and -272NX airplanes. The MCAI states an occurrence has been reported of an un-commanded door 3 escape slide release during flight. An accumulation of gas, leaking from the reservoir regulator valve, initiated the slide enclosure door panel release and liberation of the slide in a non-inflated condition. Further investigation also determined that the most probable root cause of both panel and slide inflatable assembly release in flight is the blockage of one of the system venting features. Results from the preliminary investigation, however, show that the reservoir regulator valve outlet port orifice was unable to function properly with the protective cover installed, resulting in venting malfunction. This condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to deployment in flight of a non-inflated slide, possibly resulting in reduced control of the airplane.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1249.

## **Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2022-0176 specifies procedures to modify affected reservoirs by removing the orifice protective cover. EASA AD 2022-0176 also limits the installation of affected parts under certain conditions.

Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-37, dated August 1, 2022; and Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-38, dated August 1, 2022; specify procedures for modifying the reservoir regulator valve outlet port orifice and identifies affected serial numbers. These documents are distinct since they apply to different part/serial numbers.

This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

### **FAA's Determination**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI described above. The FAA is issuing this AD after determining that the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

### **Requirements of this AD**

This AD requires accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2022-0176 described previously, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

### **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA developed a process to use some civil aviation authority (CAA) ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has been coordinating this process with manufacturers and CAAs. As a result, EASA AD 2022-0176 is incorporated by reference in this AD. This AD requires compliance with EASA AD 2022-0176 in its entirety through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD. Using

common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in EASA AD 2022-0176 does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to “all required actions and compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in EASA AD 2022-0176. Service information required by EASA AD 2022-0176 for compliance will be available at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket No. FAA-2022-1249 after this AD is published.

### **Interim Action**

The FAA considers that this AD is an interim action. If final action is later identified, the FAA might consider further rulemaking then.

### **FAA’s Justification and Determination of the Effective Date**

Section 553(b)(3)(B) of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 551 *et seq.*) authorizes agencies to dispense with notice and comment procedures for rules when the agency, for “good cause,” finds that those procedures are “impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.” Under this section, an agency, upon finding good cause, may issue a final rule without providing notice and seeking comment prior to issuance. Further, section 553(d) of the APA authorizes agencies to make rules effective in less than thirty days, upon a finding of good cause.

An unsafe condition exists that requires the immediate adoption of this AD without providing an opportunity for public comments prior to adoption. The FAA has found that the risk to the flying public justifies forgoing notice and comment prior to adoption of this rule because a malfunctioning reservoir regulator valve outlet port orifice could result in a venting malfunction, and lead to deployment in flight of a non-inflated slide, possibly resulting in reduced control of the airplane. Accordingly, notice and opportunity for prior public comment are impracticable and contrary to the public interest pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(3)(B).

In addition, the FAA finds that good cause exists pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(d) for making this amendment effective in less than 30 days, for the same reasons the FAA found good cause to forgo notice and comment.

### **Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA)**

The requirements of the RFA do not apply when an agency finds good cause pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 to adopt a rule without prior notice and comment. Because the FAA has determined that it has good cause to adopt this rule without notice and comment, RFA analysis is not required.

### **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 127 airplanes of U.S. registry. The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this AD:

<b>Estimated costs for required actions</b>			
<b>Labor cost</b>	<b>Parts cost</b>	<b>Cost per product</b>	<b>Cost on U.S. operators</b>
2 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$170	\$0	\$170	Up to \$21,590

According to the manufacturer, some or all of the costs of this AD may be covered under warranty, thereby reducing the cost impact on affected individuals. The FAA does not control warranty coverage for affected individuals. As a result, the FAA has included all known costs in the cost estimate.

### **Authority for this Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by

prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

This AD will not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This AD will not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify that this AD:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866, and
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska.

### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### **The Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA amends 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

- 1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

- 2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

**2022-21-04 Airbus SAS Airplanes:** Amendment 39-22203; Docket No. FAA-2022-1249; Project Identifier MCAI-2022-01159-T.



**(a) Effective Date**

This airworthiness directive (AD) is effective [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**(b) Affected ADs**

None.

**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all Airbus SAS Model A321-251NX, -252NX, -253NX, -271NX, and -272NX airplanes.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 25, Equipment/Furnishings.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by a report of an un-commanded door 3 escape slide release during flight due to a blockage of one of the system venting features. The FAA is issuing this AD to address a malfunctioning reservoir regulator valve outlet port orifice, which could result in a venting malfunction and lead to deployment in flight of a non-inflated slide, possibly resulting in reduced control of the airplane.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0176, dated August 24, 2022 (EASA AD 2022-0176).

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2022-0176**

(1) Where EASA AD 2022-0176 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2022-0176 defines an affected part, for this AD, an affected part is defined as a reservoir having a part number as specified in EASA AD 2022-0176

and a serial number identified in Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-37, dated August 1, 2022, or Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-38, dated August 1, 2022.

**(i) Additional AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or responsible Flight Standards Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the responsible Flight Standards Office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method approved by the Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, if any service information referenced in EASA AD 2022-0176 that contains paragraphs that are labeled as RC, the instructions in RC paragraphs, including subparagraphs under an RC paragraph, must be done to comply with this AD; any paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, that are not identified as RC are recommended. The instructions in paragraphs, including subparagraphs under those paragraphs, not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining

approval of an AMOC, provided the instructions identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to instructions identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

**(j) Additional Information**

For more information about this AD, contact Manuel F. Hernandez, Aerospace Engineer, Large Aircraft Section, FAA, International Validation Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone 562-627-5256; email [Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov](mailto:Manuel.F.Hernandez@faa.gov).

**(k) Material Incorporated by Reference**

(1) The Director of the Federal Register approved the incorporation by reference of the service information listed in this paragraph under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51.

(2) You must use this service information as applicable to do the actions required by this AD, unless this AD specifies otherwise.

(i) European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2022-0176, dated August 24, 2022.

(ii) Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-37, dated August 1, 2022.

(iii) Safran Service Bulletin A321 005-25-38, dated August 1, 2022.

(3) For EASA AD 2022-0176, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); website [easa.europa.eu](http://easa.europa.eu). You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at [ad.easa.europa.eu](http://ad.easa.europa.eu).

(4) For Safran service information, contact Safran Aerosystems Evacuation, 1747 State Route 34, Wall Township, NJ 07727-3935; telephone 732-681-3527; website [safran-group.com/companies/safran-aerosystems-evacuation](http://safran-group.com/companies/safran-aerosystems-evacuation).

(5) You may view this material at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195.

(6) You may view this material that is incorporated by reference at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email [fr.inspection@nara.gov](mailto:fr.inspection@nara.gov), or go to: [www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html](http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html).

Issued on September 29, 2022.

Christina Underwood, Acting Director,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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